Modernization of Patna Airport

†3506. SHRI RAJNITI PRASAD: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to increase the number of flights from Delhi and other places to Patna;

(b) whether Government are working on a plan to augment the capacity of Patna Airport and to modernize it;

(c) if so, by when the said work will be completed;

(d) whether there is a plan to benefit Bihar also with the recent spurt in aviation sector; and

(e) if so, in what way and by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Indian Airlines is operating 14 flights per week between Delhi and Patna, including one flight introduced with effect from 1st May, 2007. As regards further increase in operations, all airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country subject to compliance of route dispersal guidelines laid down by the Government.

(b) and (c) Airports Authority of India proposes to expand the Terminal Building complex and aircraft parking stands subject to land being made available by the State Government free of cost.

(d) and (e) Patna airport has been identified as one of the 35 non metro airports for development purpose while a new integrated Terminal Building has been constructed at Gaya airport and the work of apron expansion is in progress. Upgradation of airports/infrastructure is an on-going process, depending upon needs and no definite time frame can be indicated.

Wage revision for Air India Engineers

3507. SHRI R. SHUNMUGASUNDARAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are demands for wage revision by Unions of Air India Engineers and if so, what there demands are;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) the steps taken to resolve the issues on wage revision; and

(c) whether the delay in resolving the wage revision demands has contributed to the falling maintenance practices in the carrier?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir. Air India Aircraft Engineers Associations had demanded (i) revision of their wage structure, (ii) incentives on productivity, reliability, quality, assurance points, (iii) promotional opportunities, (iv) acquired qualification on Aircraft Maintenance work and its compensation, (v) domestic and international postings etc.

(b) Air India has already concluded wage agreements with certain categories of employees including Service Engineers. However, negotiations for wage revision are at advanced stage in respect of remaining categories of employees including the Aircraft Maintenance Engineers.

(c) No, Sir.

Ageing aircrafts in Air India

3508. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Air India has majority of ageing planes in its fleet causing frequent snags in the air;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of planes that have been grounded in the last three years;

(d) whether it is a fact that Government are contemplating to purchase new planes in its fleet; and

(e) if so, the number and make of the crafts and the time-frame of their procurement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) There is no data available to establish that due to the aged fleet, the aircraft of Air India develop technical snags. Average age of Air India's fleet is 14.6 years. As the aircraft get older, some snags develop on the components and structural members of the